



TOM CILMI
Suffolk County Legislator
10th District

For Immediate Release

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**County Building to be Illuminated in Recognition of
Congenital Heart Defects Awareness Week**

During the week of February 7 through February 14, the H. Lee Dennison Building in Suffolk County will be illuminated in red in recognition of Congenital Heart Defects Awareness Week.

Congenital heart defects impact 1 in every 110 children. CHD is the most commonly occurring birth defect and is responsible for the highest number of infant deaths associated with birth defects worldwide.

Suffolk County designated the week as Congenital Heart Defects Awareness Week in 2012. The bill, sponsored by Legislator Tom Cilmi, was adopted unanimously by the Legislature and took effect in 2013. This is the first year the Dennison Building will be illuminated in recognition.

Nicole Mogil, President of Gavin's Got Heart said, "All of us who have children effected by congenital heart defects are so appreciative of the county's efforts to raise awareness for CHD. Unfortunately, the financial burdens associated with this condition can be devastating for families who are at the same time going through tremendous emotional stress. Gavin's Got Heart, named after our son Gavin, helps to address those challenges."

Gavin's Got Heart is a 501 c-3 organization based in Islip, New York that provides financial support and council to families with children effected by CHD. To date GGH has sponsored numerous "heart families" with more than \$50,000 of contributions.

Legislator Tom Cilmi said, "Gavin has gone through three surgeries so far and is thankfully doing well, but the cost has been staggering. Many families struggle mightily to make ends meet and sometimes the outcomes aren't nearly as successful. Hopefully through this effort and with the great work of organizations like Gavin's Got Heart, we can increase awareness and funding so that families get the support they need financially and emotionally and so they know they are not going through this alone."